

Using Sport Psychology “Tools” to Enhance Performance

Chris Carr, Ph.D., HSPP
Methodist Sports Medicine Center
Indianapolis, IN

*43rd Navy Health and Preventative
Medicine Workshop*
March 24, 2004

Why Mental Skills?

- **How much of my performance (eg. Sport) is mental? (0-100%)**
- **Of all the mistakes/errors in my performance, what % of them would I consider as “mental” errors? (0-100%)**
- **Of all of my training and preparation time, what % do I spend on a structured MENTAL SKILLS plan? (0-100%)**

Making a Decision

- *Yes, I want to enhance my performance! - exercise -job-specific skills*
- *I'm not sure...tell me more...*
- *Nope, I'm happy where I am at with my performance.*
- *What's the topic?*



Creating a Plan

- **Knowledge of skills**
- **Commitment to plan**
- **Setting Goals**
- **Monitoring**
- **Evaluation**



Optimism

(Seligman, 1998)

- **Realistic and flexible optimism**
- **Optimism predicts athletic success**
- **Developing an optimistic style:**
 1. **Optimal challenge**
 2. **Modeling**
 3. **Explanatory styles - personalization, permanence, and pervasiveness**

Self-Determination

(Ryan & Deci, 2000)

Self-motivated	Striving to learn/improve
Extending oneself	Mastering new skills
Applying talents	Persistence
Commitment	Performance

What conditions promote these qualities?

- Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- Competence, autonomy, and belongingness increase motivation
- Moving people from amotivated/unwilling to compliant to committed.

Using Sport Psychology “Tools”

- *Goal setting skills*
- *Energy management and composure skills*
- *Focus and Concentration Skills*
- *Cognitive Strategies and Mental Routines*



Goal-Setting Skills

- **Outcome and Process Goals**
- **Written goals - journal**
- **Short-term and Long-term goals**
- **How to measure?**
- **When to change?**
- **Evaluate and Revise**
- **Enjoy Success**

Energy Management/Composure Skills

- **Relaxation Exercises**

 - PMR

 - Autogenic

- **Breath Control**

- **“On-site” Activation Techniques**

- **“Psyching up” Techniques**

Focus and Concentration Tools

- **Imagery**

 - External vs Internal**

 - Use of sensory**

 - modalities**

 -

 - Relaxation enhances use**

 - Kinesthetic awareness**

- **Identifying Task Relevant “Cues”**

Cognitive Strategies / Mental Routines

- **Journaling**
- **Self-talk strategies (conscious vs subconscious focus; “letting go”)**
- **Pre-performance mental “routines”-Individualized
-“Learned” tools**
- **“Cue” words -
practice/competition**

Pre-Performance Planning

- **Identifying relevant task variables**
- **Understanding individual optimal performance variables, including activation and attentional control**
- **Creating a Plan**
- **Rehearsal and repetition**
- **Journaling and Evaluation/Revision**

Elements of “Flow”

(Csikzentmihalyi, 1990)

- **Goal setting process**
- **Being immersed in the activity**
- **Paying attention to what is happening**
- **Enjoying the experience**

A Mental Training “Recipe”

- **Goals**
- **Journal - monitors progress/evaluation**
- **Arousal regulation - 10-15 mins/exercise**
- **Attentional control - 10-15 mins/imagery**
- **Cognitive strategies - may be in journal;
3x5 cards; posters; individual variation**
- **Daily execution/monitoring/evaluation
-consultant**

Questions?

- ***Chris Carr, Ph.D.,
HSPP
Methodist Sports Med.
Ctr. 201 Pennsylvania
Parkway Suite 200
Indianapolis,
IN 46280***
- ***ccarr@methodistsports
.com***
- ***www.methodistsports.co
m***

